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THE SOURCES OF LANDOR'S *Gebir*

Walter Savage Landor told John Forster, his biographer, that the source of his youthful epic, *Gebir*, was a work published in 1785 called *The Progress of Romance, through times, countries, and manners, with remarks on the good and bad effects of them respectively, in a course of Evening Conversations*. Miss Reeve states in her Preface to this work that her story came in turn from the French translation made by M. Pierre Vattier of an Arabian manuscript by Murtada ibn al Khafif, found in the Mazarin Library. In his bibliography of *Gebir* in the collected works of Landor Mr. Charles George Crump expresses doubt that Miss Reeve saw this French translation, thinking it possible that she knew the translation of the manuscript made in 1672 by John Davies, a voluminous translator. Mr. Crump had not seen the English translation. However, a comparison, which I have just completed, between Davies' translation and Miss Reeve's tale indicates the improbability that Miss Reeve knew Davies' translation, and the probability that she translated M. Vattier's French freely, adapting the story to her own ends. Not only does Miss Reeve omit various episodes included by Davies, such as "the figure of an Ichneumon . . . made of Gold," and additional details concerning the death of *Gebir*, but she never once uses the phraseology of Davies, or details which could be precisely attributed to him. It is reasonably certain, then, that the order of development of the story of *Gebir* was not through Davies, but as follows: The Arabian manuscript, M. Vattier's translation, the last story in Miss Reeve's *Progress of Romance*, and then Landor's epic. The legend, as a part of English poetry, ends with the imitations of Landor's *Gebir*, William Sotheby's *Saul* (1802), and Sergeant Rough's *Conspiracy of Gowrie*, written at about the same time.

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## BRIEF MENTION

*The Influence of Christianity on the Vocabulary of Old English Poetry*. By Albert Keiser (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature. Vol. v, Nos. 1, 2, 1919). Two decades ago the import of this subject was expounded by Dr. H. S. MacGillivray (*Studien zur englischen Philologie*, VIII), who in his turn was guided by Karl Weinhold, R. von Raumer, and Bernhard Kahle. These scholars had studied Gothic, Old High German, and Old Norse respectively with reference to the same 'Influence,' and Dr. MacGillivray derived from them not only the conception of the

problem as a whole but also a method for classifying the material. This method has been readopted, or continued, by Dr. Keiser, who in a sense has completed the work begun by Dr. MacGillivray. Of these two investigators the earlier attempted to survey the entire literature, prose and poetry, but unfortunately he encumbered his material with details so profuse as to compel him to restrict his publication to merely one-third of what his plan embraced. "No continuation has ever appeared," writes Dr. Keiser, and adds that in a letter to him (Dec. 2, 1916) Dr. MacGillivray "states that certain circumstances had led to 'the complete shipwreck of my hopes for the completion of my book.' His consent to take up the work was obtained."

The Anglo-Saxon (Old English) member of the group of studies begun by von Raumer has therefore been the special concern of two authors. It is important to keep in mind that the publications of these two authors constitute a peculiar whole. Restricting his observations to the poetry and adopting a more concise method of presentation, Dr. Keiser has been able to traverse all the approved divisions of the subject within the printed space required by Dr. MacGillivray's initial chapters. But this resultant completeness does not annul the value of the earlier and incomplete study; it rather heightens the importance of regarding both prose and poetry, and it compels the recognition of the relation of the two studies to each other in combining to make a 'peculiar whole.' In this connection should be mentioned *Die kirchlichen und speziell wissenschaftlichen romanischen Lehnworte Chaucers*, von Hans Remus (*Studien zur engl. Philologie*, xiv, 1906), which in time falls between the two studies under consideration and is to be collated with them especially with reference to the discussion of the cultural history of Early England so far as it is pertinent to the adoption of new words.

Dr. Keiser's (K) first three chapters (pp. 16-36) correspond (without change of titles) to Dr. MacGillivray's (M) four chapters (pp. 1-147). The whole number of chapters in K is twelve (pp. 16-131). So far as the overlapping of the two studies reaches, K has many references to M to compensate for the briefer method of presentation and for the exclusion of the prose-words. The pursuit of these references will always be well rewarded. Thus, the excellent judgment of K touching the disputed question of the original use of *hæðen* will be more fully appreciated after considering what the reference to M discloses. Be it observed that M and K do not agree with the *NED*. On the other hand the extraordinarily valuable article *church* in the *NED*, is accepted as the basis for the discussion of *cirice* by both M and K; and again there is a computable disadvantage in not reading both. That these two studies in details of discussion thus supplement each other within the limits of the designated chapters as well as in the range of

observation (prose and poetry) is sufficiently stressed by the cross-references in K's foot-notes.

Several words from these studies may be selected for comment. M. records *ǣ-swica*, *ē-swica* (pp. 13, 17), and interprets the prefix as the equivalent of Goth. *us-*. In agreement with this view Mr. Toller in his Supplement has deleted [*ǣ*, 'law']. But one may hold that the rejected view has not been conclusively set aside. Why the Pater Noster is palm-twiggled is not explained by K (p. 49). A suggestion has been made by Dr. von Vincenti (*Münchener Beiträge zur rom. u. engl. Phil.* xxxi, 25; see also pp. 52, 56, 124). K agrees with Professor Tupper in finding designations of the communion-vessels in *Riddles* Nos. 49 and 60; and as is done in Toller's *Dic.*, he accepts (p. 98) as conclusive Professor Cook's happy suggestion (*MLN.* iv, 129; see also xxi, 8) that Cynewulf coined the word *synrūst* to translate 'rubigo peccati.'

That the subject may so far as possible be viewed in its Germanic completeness, K has with advantage introduced numerous references to the cognate studies. For example, under the heading *martyrs*, he refers not only to M but also for OHG. to von Raumer and for ON. to Kahle. The references of this specific class added to those that indicate an industrious and judicious use of the various writings listed in the bibliography prove the scholarly character of K's publication. Reverting to the *martyrs*, however, one must wish that the reference to M had been framed to remind the reader of the significant prose-word *cýðere*. But what is lost by the omission of the prose-records is made more conspicuous in the contrast between M and K in the paragraphs relating to the designations of the *apostles*. The absence of *lēorningcniht* from K's list will to many minds prove conclusively that the exclusion of prose from this study has resulted in most regrettable incompleteness at many points. Indeed to argue this view in the abstract would be to arrive at the same conclusion. Considering the prose of the Anglo-Saxon period from the *Cura Pastoralis* to the great homilist Ælfric, what 'literature' could reflect more inevitably and more completely the 'Christian Influence' on the language? Prose, not poetry, is primarily discursive, argumentative, persuasive, just the medium to express popular thought. Poetry does not systematize thought; for that one looks to prose. For an enumeration of the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit we do not look to Cynewulf's *Christ* (cf. Cook's ed., p. 137) but to the homilies and tracts of Ælfric (see Förster, *Anglia*, xvi, 6, and Zimmermann there cited). So too for the *hēafod-leahtras*, the 'Deadly Sins,' we turn to Ælfric (*Hom.* ii, 218; again see Förster, *l. c.*, p. 46).

This notice of Dr. Keiser's monograph is somewhat belated and is therefore now primarily intended to make the work known to students who may not yet have become aware of it. Obviously, M and K should be bound up together into one convenient desk-book.

In that form these two studies would prove so helpful that one cannot refrain from making this practical suggestion. Both studies meet the demands of a good hand-book in being well indexed and in citing contributory matter with utmost clearness and accuracy.

An acknowledgment of the scholarly character of the two studies can hardly be made without being conscious of the regret that the desired (not a 'peculiar') whole has not been achieved. What has been made clear by M and K is the need of a comprehensive and uniformly constructed treatise to embrace the complete reports of both prose and poetry; and one would add the need of an incorporation of what would be gained from a collation with the 'cognate' studies. Here is a plan for an attractive and highly-rewarding undertaking.

J. W. B.

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*Charlemagne (The Distracted Emperor) Drame Elisabethan Anonyme. Edition critique avec Introduction et Notes.* Par Franck L. Schoell. (Princeton University Press, 1920.) The anonymous play of *Charlemagne*, sixth in order of the collection of dramas included in Egerton Ms. 1994, was first printed in the late A. H. Bullen's first series of *Old Plays* (iii, 161-261; 1883), a collection which, though out of print and now commanding a high price, is of course known to all serious students of the drama. It is therefore incorrect to hail Professor Schoell's reprint as "a literary find of great importance," as one reviewer has done. On a first reading years ago three strong clues led me to Chapman as the author of the piece: (1) the emperor's devotion to his dead wife (cf. the Count St. Anne in *Monsieur D'Olive*); (2) the simile of the ravens who seize upon the carcass after flying disregardingly over spicy fields (cf. *Chabot* iv, i, 14 f.); and (3) the outcome of the La Busse sub-plot (cf. the curious expression in *Chabot* iv, i, 137-8: "The foolish net he wore / To hide his nakedness"). Mr. Bullen, after suggesting and dismissing the possibility first of Tourneur's and then of Marston's authorship, came to hold that Chapman had a chief share in the play. Fleay, erratic as usual, suggested first Field and then Dekker. Professor Schoell has put the question of authorship beyond any further possibility of doubt by a convincing, indeed overwhelming, series of parallels in characterization, plot-development, technique, ideas, and vocabulary between *Charlemagne* and the various plays of the Chapman canon. (Can it be that this is the play which Professor Parrott, in the Preface to his edition of Chapman's *Comedies*, promises to rescue from anonymity, reclaim for Chapman, and include in the third and not yet published volume of his edition of Chapman's complete works? Or is there yet another addition to the accepted list forthcoming?) Professor Schoell, by transcribing the play anew from the ms., has been able to correct a goodly number of misreadings in Bullen's

editon. It is perhaps a pity that his special preoccupation with the problem of authorship has limited the scope of his commentary. The various interesting analogues to Charlemagne's love for his dead wife might well have been noted, especially those in *The Duke of Milan* and in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*. Some readers, too, would have liked to be reminded of Burton's retelling of the same legend (*Anat. Melan.* Part 3, Sect. 2, Mem. 3, Subs. 5). The editor has nothing new to offer with regard to La Busse's fulfillment of Charlemagne's fantastic conditions for the pardoning of Ganelon, his note to the passage (v, iv, 40) being a mere translation of Hazlitt's note as cited by Parrott (*Chabot* iv, i, 136-7). One would like to have traced down the "vieille histoire" of the fisherman's daughter who arrayed herself in the fishing-net in order to comply with the "great lord's" command. One may add that the parallel with *All Fools* II, i, 252, suggested by the editor, is a doubtful example. The foot-note at the bottom of page 114 belongs on page 113; Mr. Bullen's initials should be "A. H." not "H. A."—Professor Schoell is to be thanked for his excellent and much needed reprint and congratulated upon his unimpeachable proof of Chapman's authorship. Students interested in this play look forward to the forthcoming edition of Heywood's *The Captives*, announced by the Yale Press, and drawn from Bullen's rare volumes. But when shall we have an edition of the greatest of Bullen's "finds"—*Sir John van Olden Barnavelt*?

S. C. C.

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The primary object of Mary, Countess of Lovelace, in writing *Ralph, Earl of Lovelace: a Memoir* (London, Christopher's, 1920. 8°, vi + 170 pages), was to justify her husband in regard to his publication of *Astarte* (1905), the contents of which involved the name of his grandfather, Lord Byron, in such unspeakable scandal. We see from this memoir that its subject owed a deep debt of love and gratitude to his maternal grandmother, the poet's widow, for he had spent a great part of his childhood under her roof (after his mother's death in 1852, we presume, although the writer does not say so), and it was, therefore, entirely natural that he should have conceived it to be his duty to clear away the mists of misapprehension and prejudice which had enveloped her reputation from the time of her separation from Lord Byron, and, particularly, in her old age. The real origin of this, for the most part, undeserved unpopularity was, of course, the fact that she had been drawn into domestic strife with one of the great geniuses of modern times—a man, too, who, as the foremost champion in literature of liberty, in an age that was seeking liberty, was all the more certain to attract to his side the sympathies of the world at large. The only way to vindicate the victim of this false judgment was to publish the contemporary correspondence, pertinent to the question, which

would set in its true light her conduct towards her husband in the great crisis of her life. As appears from the present work, Lord Lovelace cherished this purpose for many years before he fulfilled it, and we have here the history of the various circumstances that caused the delay: first, the objections raised by the trustees of Lady Byron's estate (including Dr. Lushington, who was her legal adviser in the matter of her separation from Lord Byron), subsequent difficulties about obtaining access to the letters, owing to the attitude on the subject of the elder Lord Lovelace (who, it may be remarked incidentally, was estranged from his son, during the greater part of the latter's life), similar difficulties of access to an important body of correspondence between Lord Byron and Lady Melbourne, extending from 1812 to 1815, which threw light on the question of the separation and which had been inherited by Lady Dorchester from her father, Lord Broughton, etc., etc. Consequently, it was not until 1893, when the elder Lord Lovelace died and his son and successor came into possession of the family papers, that the main obstacles to the intended vindication were removed. The account of these affairs constitutes a long story, but one of great interest. Lady Lovelace observes, by the way, that the above-mentioned letters of Byron to Lady Melbourne are not inferior to any that he ever wrote. They are still unpublished, although Lord Lovelace, to ensure their preservation, made or had made, in all, four copies of them.

The chief interest of the present book is, of course, due to its connection with the great Byron mystery. Lord Lovelace, however, himself possessed a vigorous and highly cultivated mind and he numbered among his friends such contemporaries as W. E. H. Lecky, Lady Ritchie, Francis Galton, and others. The author has done well, then, to include in her volume a selection from his letters—especially, a considerable number relating to his achievements in Alpine climbing. The extent to which he allowed his mind to dwell on the dark episode in the life of his famous grandfather reveals a morbid strain in his character, for which his solitary bringing-up in childhood is, no doubt, in part, responsible, but, on the whole, one cannot rise from the perusal of this memoir without a feeling of high respect for his ability and conscientiousness.

Lady Lovelace speaks of herself as "unpractised in writing." Nevertheless, her work, as a matter of fact, is admirably written. The only fault that we have to find with her is that she is so chary of dates. Not even the birth-year of Lord Lovelace is given.

All students of Byron will be glad to read the following Publisher's Note at the end of the preface: "A new edition of 'Astarte,' including many hitherto unpublished letters from Lord and Lady Byron, Mrs. Leigh, and Mrs. Villiers, is in preparation at the time of going to press."

J. D. B.